

1. NVA soldiers read published accounts and received lectures on the status of U.S. pilots shot down over NVN. Prior to 1965 downed airmen were considered prisoners of war and were to be treated as such, but after that year the policy changed, and pilots were to be thought of as "rangers," "commandos," or "spies".

All pilots were commandos because they destroyed crops, bombed factories, sometimes killed civilians, and disrupted the economy; none of these areas were construed as military targets. The treatment a pilot would receive would be more severe than it was prior to 1965. Previously he was given higher rations and shown more consideration, but later a captured airman received only a standard NVA food ration. The physical treatment he received was dependent upon whether a main force or militia unit captured him.

2. A pilot who was captured by the military would fare better than one taken by militia forces or civilians, Cadres used to compare the two methods of prisoner handling during indoctrination sessions. Members of the main force were told to treat prisoners well for the cadres wanted to raise the prestige of the NVA in the eyes of the world. When the pilot was released he would report that he was treated well. It is probable that the NVA wanted their policy towards prisoners to be known so that Allied forces would show the same consideration to captured NVA personnel in SVN. However, pilots captured by popular forces might be beaten and received little in the way of consideration. Differences in the two policies were explained in terms of the distinction in missions between main forces and popular force units.

3. The principal task assigned to the militia was to protect the people. Their function was to spread propaganda and to instill a trust of the government in the people. If militia forces took an Allied flier it would profit them immensely to bring him before the people charging, "This is an American pilot who destroyed peoples' factories...!" Their purpose was to stir up the hearts of the people to hate the Americans. Sometimes, according to the cadres, the situation would get out of hand and angry mobs of people would beat and kick the pilots.

4. Cadres cited examples of beatings the U.S. pilots received at the hands of the people. Soldiers were instructed to intervene if they saw the people attacking a pilot. They were to inform the people that the pilot had to stay alive in order that he could be exploited for information and be used for propaganda purposes.

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1. In either June or July 1966 [] an American pilot on exhibition in QUYNH THANH Village near [] QUYNH AN Village, QUYNH LUU District, NGHE AN Province, NVN. The pilot was dressed in the brown clothes of a North Vietnamese. He was not bound but was bare footed and walked with difficulty. He did not appear injured but seemed ill. The pilot appeared to be about 42 years of age. His flight suit and other clothes were on exhibition.

2. The people became angry and wanted to beat him but the militia protected him. He was being taken to many villages for exhibition. Later he would be taken someplace north.

[] one late morning in June 1966, [] in the ocean off the coast of QUYNH LUU District where QUEN River enters the ocean, [] the shooting down of a AD6 plane by AAA guns from the shore. The two occupants parachuted into the water and were rescued a few minutes later by an amphibious aircraft which flew in at a low angle before landing in the water. At a distance of about two kilometers, Source saw two figures climb from the water into the airplane when the plane door was opened for them. The amphibious plane then took off easily, climbing gradually).

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